

The Devil's Own

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A Romance of the
Black Hawk War

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A ROMANCE OF THE BLACK HAWK WAR

"The Devil's Own" is a stirring tale of the stirring frontier days of the middle West—the of the Mississippi river in the exciting times of the Black Hawk war of the early thirties. This is the famous Indian war in which Zachary Taylor and Abraham Lincoln, future presidents of the United States, and Jefferson Davis, future president of the Confederacy, all took part. On the Indian side were Black Hawk and Keokuk, two strong and able Indian chiefs—one the bitter enemy of the White Man, the other his consistent friend.

The characters are typical of the time and the place—Knox, the hero, army officer; Beaucaire, the aristocratic planter and slave-owner, and his fascinating daughter; Kirby (The Devil's Own) gambler and desperado. And interwoven with it all is the slavery question.

Randall Parrish, the author, is one of the popular writers of the day. He knows the country and the time. And he gives us action, always action. Love, fighting and adventure—all are in this tale in generous measure.

CHAPTER I.

At Old Fort Armstrong.

It was the early springtime, and my history tells me the year was 1832, although now that seems so far away I almost hesitate to write the date. It appears surprising that through the haze of all those intervening years—intensely active years with me—I should now be able to recall so clearly the scene of that far-off morning of my youth, and depict in memory each minor detail. Yet, as you read on, and realize yourself the stirring events resulting from that idle moment, you may be able to comprehend the deep impression left upon my mind, which no cycle of time could ever erase.

I was barely twenty then, a strong, almost headstrong boy, and the far wilderness was still very new to me, although for two years past I had held army commission and been assigned to duty in frontier forts. Yet never previously had I been stationed at quite so isolated an outpost of civilization as was this combination of rock and log defense erected at the southern extremity of Rock Island, fairly marooned amid the sweep of the great river, with Indian-haunted land stretching for leagues on every side. A mere handful of troops was quartered there, technically two companies of infantry, yet numbering barely enough for one; and this in spite of rumors daily drifting to us that the Sacs and Foxes, with their main village just below, were already becoming restless and warlike, inflamed by the slow approach of white settlers into the valley of the Rock. Indeed, so short was the garrison of officers, that the harassed commander had ventured to retain me for field service, in spite of the fact that I was detailed to staff duty, had borne dispatches up the Mississippi from General Gaines and expected to return again by the first boat.

The morning was one of deep-blue sky and bright sunshine. As soon as early drill ended I had left the fort enclosure and sought a lonely perch on the great rock above the mouth of the cave. Below, extended a magnificent river, fully a mile wide from shore to shore, unbroken in its vast sweep toward the sea except for a few small willow-studded islands a mile or two away. Over there, in the near shadow of the Rock Valley, was where Black Hawk, dissatisfied, revengeful, dwelt with his British band, gathering swiftly about him the younger, fighting warriors of every tribe his influence could reach. He had been at the fort but two days before, a tall, straight, taciturn Indian; no chief by birth, yet a born leader of men, dominant in speech and insolent of demeanor in spite of the presence also at the council of his people's true representative, the silent, cautious Keokuk.

Even with my small knowledge of such things it was plain enough to be seen there existed deadly hatred between these two, and that Keokuk's desire for peace with the whites alone postponed an outbreak. Already tales reached us of encroaching settlers advancing along the valley, and of savage, retaliating raids which could only terminate in armed encounters. That

He Had Been at the Fort but Two Days Before, a Tall, Straight, Taciturn Indian.

More pretentious structure occupied by the officers of the garrison. A number of soldiers off duty were loitering in front of the barracks, while a small group of officers occupied chairs on the log porch of their quarters, enjoying the warmth of the sun. I greeted these as I passed, conscious that their eyes followed me curiously as I approached the commandant's office. Major Bliss glanced up at my entrance, with deep-set eyes hidden beneath bushy gray eyebrows, his smooth-shaven face appearing almost youthful in contrast with a wealth of gray hair.

Keokuk could continue to control his people no longer seemed probable to me, for the Hawk was evidently the stronger character of the two, possessed the larger following and made no attempt to conceal the depth of his hatred for all things American.

Down below where I sat a little river steamboat was tied to the wharf, a dingy stern-wheeler, with the word "Warrior" painted across the pilot house. My eyes and thoughts turned that way. Standing alone together near the stern were a heavily-built man with white hair and beard, and a younger, rather slender fellow, with clipped, black mustache. Both were unusually well dressed, the latter exceedingly natty and fashionable in attire, rather over-the-top, I thought, while the former wore a long coat and high white stock. Involuntarily I had placed them in my mind as river gamblers, but was still observing their movements with some curiosity when Captain Throckmorton crossed the gangplank and began ascending the steep bluff. The path to be followed led directly past where I was sitting and, recognizing me, he stopped to exchange greetings.

"What! have you finished your day's work already, lieutenant?" he exclaimed pleasantly. "Mine has only just begun."

"So I observe. It was garrison talk last night that the Warrior was to depart at daylight."

"That was the plan. However, the Wanderer went north during the night," he explained, "and brought mail from below, so we are being held for the return letters. I am going up to the office now."

My eyes returned to the scene below.

"You have some passengers aboard?"

"A few; picked up several at the lead mines, besides those aboard from Prairie du Chien."

"Evidently all of your passengers are not miners, captain," I ventured.

"Those two standing there at the stern, for instance."

He turned and looked. "No," he said; "that big man is Judge Beaucaire, from Missouri. He has a plantation just above St. Louis, an old French grant. Of course you know the younger one."

"Never saw him before."

"Then you have never traveled much on the lower river. That's Joe Kirby."

"Joe Kirby?"

"Certainly; you must have heard of him. First time I ever knew of his drifting so far north, as there are not many pickings up here. Have rather suspected he might be laying for Beaucaire, but the two haven't touched a card coming down."

"He is a gambler, then?"

"A thoroughbred; works between St. Louis and New Orleans. I can't just figure out yet what he is doing up here. I asked him flat out, but he only laughed, and he isn't the sort of man you get very friendly with, some say he has Indian blood in him, so I dropped it. He and the judge seem pretty thick, and they may be playing in their rooms. See you again before we leave; am going up now to have a talk with the major."

more pretentious structure occupied by the officers of the garrison.

"How long have you been here at Armstrong, lieutenant?" he questioned, toying with an official-looking paper in his hands.

"Only about three weeks, sir. I came north on the Enterprise, with dispatches from General Gaines."

"I remember; you belong to the Fifth, and without orders, I promptly draughted you into garrison service." His eyes laughed. "Only sorry I cannot hold you any longer. It seems you have an application pending for a furlough."

"Yes, sir."

"It is my pleasure to inform you that it has been granted—sixty days, with permission to proceed east. There has been considerable delay evidently in locating you."

A sudden vision arose before me of my mother's face and of the old home among the hills as I took the paper from his extended hands and glanced at the printed and written lines.

"The date is a month ago."

"That need not trouble you, Knox. The furlough begins with this delivery. However, as I shall require your services as far as St. Louis, I shall date this acceptance from the time of your arrival there."

"Which is very kind, sir."

"Not at all. You have proven of considerable assistance here, and I shall part from you with regret. I have letters for Governor Clark of Missouri and Governor Reynolds of Illinois; also one to General Atkinson at Jefferson barracks, detailing my views on the present Indian situation. These are confidential, and I hesitate to intrust them to the regular mail service. I had intended sending them down river in charge of a noncommissioned officer, but shall now utilize your services instead—that is if you are willing to assume their care?"

"Very gladly, of course."

"I thought as much. Each of these is to be delivered in person. Captain Throckmorton informs me that he will be prepared to depart within an hour. You can be ready in that time?"

I smiled.

"In much less. I have little with me but a field kit, sir. It will not require long to pack that."

"Then return here at the first whistle and the letters will be ready for you. That will be all now. Travel as a civilian if you please, lieutenant, but I suggest it will be well to wear the uniform of your rank when you deliver the letters."

Fifteen minutes sufficed to gather together all my belongings and change from blue into gray, and, as I emerged from quarters, the officers of the garrison flocked about me with words of congratulation and innumerable questions. Universal envy of my good fortune was evident, but this assumed no unpleasant form, although much was said to express their belief in my early return.

I shook hands all around, and left them, hastening across the parade to the office. Ten minutes later I crossed the gangplank and put foot for the first time on the deck of the Warrior. Evidently the crew had been awaiting my arrival to push off, for instantly the whistle shrieked again, and immediately after the boat began to churn its way out into the river current, with bow pointing down stream. Throckmorton leaned out from the open window of the pilot house and hailed me.

"Put your dunnage in the third cabin, Knox—here, you, Sam, lay hold and help."

It was nothing to boast of, that third cabin, being a mere hole, measuring possibly about four feet by seven, but sufficient for sleeping quarters, and was reasonably clean. It failed, however, in attractiveness sufficient to keep me below, and as soon as I had deposited my bag and indulged in a somewhat captious scrutiny of the bedding I very willingly returned to the outside and clambered up a steep ladder to the upper deck.

Judge Beaucaire was standing at the low rail. Our eyes met inquiringly, and he bowed with all the ceremony of the old school.

"A new passenger on board, I think, sir," and his deep, resonant voice left a pleasant impression. "You must have joined our company at Fort Armstrong?"

"Your supposition is correct," I answered, some peculiar constraint preventing me from referring to my military rank. "My name is Knox, and I have been about the island for a few weeks. I believe you are Judge Beaucaire of Missouri?"

man, with deep chest, great breadth of shoulders and strong individual face, yet bearing unmistakable signs of dissipation, together with numerous marks of both care and age.

"I feel the honor of your recognition, sir," he said with dignity. "Knox, I believe you said? Of the Knox family at Cape Girardeau, may I inquire?"

"No connection to my knowledge; my home was at Wheeling."

"Ah! I have never been that far east; indeed the extent of my travels along the beautiful Ohio has only been to the Falls. The Beaucaires were originally from Louisiana."

"You must have been among the earlier settlers of Missouri?"

"Before the Americans came, sir," proudly. "My grandfather arrived at Beaucaire Landing during the old French regime; but doubtless you know all this?"

"No, judge," I answered, recognizing the egotism of the man but believing frankness to be the best policy. "This happens to be my first trip on the upper river, and I merely chanced to know your name because you had been pointed out to me by Captain Throckmorton. I understood from him that you represented one of the oldest families in that section."

"There were but very few here before us," he answered with undissipated pride. "My grandfather's grant



"Rather a Dull Lot on Board—Miners and Such Cattle."

of land was from the king. Alphonse de Beaucaire, sir, was the trusted lieutenant of D'Iberville—a soldier and a gentleman."

I bowed in acknowledgment, the family arrogance of the man interesting me deeply. So evident was this pride that this might be all the man had left—this memory of the past.

"The history of those early days is not altogether familiar to me," I admitted regretfully. "But surely D'Iberville must have ruled Louisiana more than one hundred years ago?"

The judge smiled.

"Quite true. This grant of ours was practically his last official act. Alphonse de Beaucaire took possession in 1712, one hundred and twenty years ago, sir. I was myself born at Beaucaire sixty-eight years ago."

"I should have guessed you as ten years younger. And the estate still remains in its original grant?"

The smile of condescension deserted his eyes, and his thin lips pressed tightly together.

"I—I regret not; many of the later years have proven disastrous, in the extreme," he admitted, hesitatingly. "You will pardon me, sir, if I decline to discuss misfortune. Ah, Monsieur Kirby! I have been awaiting you. Have you met with this young man who came aboard at Fort Armstrong? I—I am unable to recall the name."

"Steven Knox."

I felt the firm, strong grip of the other's hand, and looked straight into his dark eyes. They were like a mask. The face was long, firm-jawed, slightly swarthy, a tightly clipped black mustache shadowing the upper lip. It was a reckless face, yet appeared carved from marble.

"Exceedingly pleased to meet you," he said carelessly. "Rather a dull lot on board—miners and such cattle. Bound for St. Louis?"

"Yes—and beyond."

"Shall see more of you then. Well, judge, how do you feel? Carver and McAtee are waiting for us down below."

The two disappeared together down the ladder and I was again left alone in my occupancy of the upper deck.

CHAPTER II.

History of the Beaucaires. The first two days and nights of the journey southward were devoid of any special interest or adventure. After the first day Kirby withdrew all attention from me and ceased in his endeavor to cultivate my acquaintance, convinced of my disinclination to indulge in cards. Throckmorton, being his own pilot, seldom left the wheelhouse, and consequently I passed many hours on the bench beside him. At one time or another he had met the famous characters along the river banks, and through continual questioning I

thus finally became possessed of the story of the house of Beaucaire.

In the main it contained no unusual features. Through the personal influence of D'Iberville at Louis court Alphonse de Beaucaire had originally received a royal grant of ten thousand acres of land bordering the west bank of the Mississippi a few miles above St. Louis. When his master returned to France leaving him unemployed, Beaucaire, possessing ample means of his own, had preferred to remain in America. In flatboats, propelled by voyageurs, and accompanied by a considerable retinue of slaves, he, with his family, had ascended the river and finally settled on his princely estate. Here he erected what for those early days was a stately mansion, and devoted himself to cultivating the land. Twenty years later, when his death occurred, he possessed the finest property along the upper river, was shipping heavily to the New Orleans market, and was probably the most influential man in all that section.

His only son, Felipe, succeeded him, but was not so successful in administration, seriously lacking in business judgment, and being decidedly indolent by nature. Felipe married into one of the oldest and most respectable families of St. Louis, and as a result of that union had one son, Lucius, who grew up reckless of restraint, and preferred to spend his time in New Orleans, rather than upon the plantation. Lucius was a young man of twenty-six, unsettled in habits, when the father died, and against his inclination, was compelled to return to Missouri and assume control of the property. He found matters in rather bad condition, and his was not at all the type of mind to remedy them. Much of the land had been already irretrievably lost through speculation, and when his father's obligations had been met, and his own gambling debts paid, the estate, once so princely and magnificent, was reduced to barely five hundred acres, together with a comparatively small amount of cash. This condition sufficed to sober Lucius for a few years, and he married a Menard of Cape Girardeau, of excellent family but not great wealth, and earnestly endeavored to rebuild his fortunes. Unfortunately his reform did not last. The evil influences of the past soon proved too strong for one of his temperament. The plantation house became in time a rendezvous for all the wild spirits of that neighborhood, and stories of fierce drinking bouts and mad gambling were current in St. Louis.

"Have you ever been at Beaucaire, captain?" I asked.

"We always stop at the landing, but I have only once been up the cliff to where the house stands. The judge was away from home—in St. Louis, I believe—the day of my visit. He had sold me some timber, and I went out with the family lawyer, a man named Haines, living at the landing, to look it over."

"The house was closed?"

"No; it is never closed. The housekeeper was there, and also the two daughters."

"Daughters?"

"Certainly; hadn't I told you about them? Both girls are accepted as his daughters; but, if all I have heard is true, one must be his granddaughter." He paused momentarily, his eyes on the river. "Haines told me a number of strange things about that family I had never heard before," he admitted at last. "You see he has known them for years, and attended to most of Beaucaire's legal business. This is about how the story runs, as he told it. It wasn't generally known, but it seems that Lucius Beaucaire has been married twice—the first time to a Creole girl in New Orleans when he was scarcely more than a boy. Nobody now living probably knows whatever became of her, but likely she died early; anyway, she never came north, or has since been heard from. The important part is that she gave birth to a son, who remained in New Orleans, probably in her care, until he was fourteen or fifteen years old. Then some occurrence, possibly his mother's death, caused the judge to send for the lad, whose name was Adelbert, and had him brought to Missouri. All this happened before Haines settled at the Landing, and previous to Beaucaire's second marriage to Mademoiselle Menard. Bert, as the boy was called, grew up wild, and father and son quarreled so continuously that finally, and before he was twenty, the latter ran away, and has never been heard of since—simply disappeared, and no one knows to this day whether he is alive or dead. At least if Judge Beaucaire ever received any word from him he never confessed as much to Haines. However, the boy left behind tangible evidence of his existence."

An exciting game of poker between an honest man and card sharps, with a tragic ending.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Home Town Helps

HELP BUSINESS TO PROSPER

Matter of Vital Interest to Whole Community That Its Industries Shall Flourish and Grow.

There is an old saying among merchants that there are just two ways to increase their volume of business, remarks Carl Hunt in The Nation's Business. One is through the sale of merchandise to more people; the other, through the sale of more merchandise to present customers.

What is the community doing to help present industries? Is some manufacturer handicapped through the lack of street car transportation for his men, or through the need of a railroad switch that a stubborn city council has declined to authorize, or through some restriction which might easily and properly be removed?

Or could additional capital be invested in the present enterprises of the city, to the benefit of the community, and the profit of local investors?

I am well acquainted with a small Indiana city which in time past has undertaken to be the home of a rolling mill and a large tin-plate mill, though there was no apparent reason why either should have been situated there. Both of them failed.

In the meantime, the whole community stood upon a foundation of stone which was of excellent quality for paving purposes, and from which lime could be, and later was, produced. The one man who entered the stone business there eventually had a thriving trade which later, passing into the hands of outside people, grew still larger. With fuel—a good grade of coal—but a few miles away, and with such stone deposits, this community might have developed along this line had local capital become interested, or had the community made a serious and well-directed effort to interest stone men from other places, for the city has excellent railroad service—three main lines—and is within easy shipping distance of several important cities which afford a large market for crushed stone.

CATERING TO TOURISTS



These concrete tables and benches have been built in a picturesque canyon by the people of San Bernardino, Cal., as a convenience to picnickers and motor tourists.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Interlocking Brick.

Burned walls falling all around him during the great fire in San Francisco gave an Arizona man the idea of self-binding and interlocking brick, a type of building material which promises to revolutionize brick construction work the world over. The principle of the brick is decidedly simple. On one side of the brick are two annular bosses which are concentrically located opposite two annular depressions on the other side of the brick, so that when the bricks are laid the bosses register with the depressions. In that way the bricks are locked into the wall and none can be removed unless all the bricks above it are first taken away. In sections of the country where hollow-wall construction has come into popularity the interlocking brick seems likely to prove the most popular, because it can be used in tying the two walls together. The bricks can be extended across the open space and made to lock together and act as a binder. Hollow-walls are desirable because of their coolness in sections where humidity prevails.

Use Care in Selecting Plants.

In selecting plants one is governed largely by the soil and climatic conditions, position of buildings, walks, drives, fountains, bodies of water, and the surrounding area. Soil conditions may be changed by the addition of manure or commercial fertilizers. Often the amateur is not familiar with the various kinds of plants, and is unable to make the proper selection. For such individuals it is advisable for them to visit the parks and other well planted landscapes. This will enable one to become familiar with the plants and their names, and will aid greatly in the selections of shrubbery to suit his particular needs. Metal tags giving the technical and common names are attached to many of the plants in the parks which will be found helpful to the amateur.

Vacant Lots Beautified.

Vacant lots in a western city are made attractive by transplanting wild flowers upon them.